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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 003114

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A/S FRAZER

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SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: DEPUTY FM TALKS ABOUT DIALOGING WITH
CIC, SOMALILAND INDEPENDENCE, EEBC DECISION

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR KEVIN SULLIVAN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) A
ND (D).

11. (C) Summary. Deputy Foreign Minister Tekeda Alemu told Vicki Huddleston on November 20 (during a farewell call) that Ethiopia preferred to dialogue with the CIC rather than enter into armed conflict. Tekeda said that Ethiopia had invited the CIC to talks in Addis Ababa, and the "ball was now in the CIC court." Tekeda recognized that a successful dialogue with the CIC would result in government body that merged both TFG and CIC representatives. Tekeda advocated for recognition of Somaliland, pointing out that it would be critical to get Egypt on board. He said, however, that meaningful and lasting dialogue would not be possible until the CIC expelled the jihadists, Eritreans, and other outside forces. Tekeda asked the USG help to organize the international community and particularly African countries to support independence for Somaliland to contain the growing CIC. With regard to the EEBC's recent announcement that it planned to move forward with border demarcation based on a coordinates, Tekeda said he did not understand the EEBC's decision given Eritrea's violation of 1640 and current occupation of the TSZ. End Summary.

12. (SBU) Huddleston met with Deputy Foreign Minister Tekeda Alemu and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director of Europe and North America Almaz Amha for a farewell call on November 20. Huddleston told Tekeda that the US will continue to seek a stronger a partnership with Ethiopia and help the country with its evolving democracy and internal/regional threats. Huddleston explained that the US will continue to push Ethiopia on its human rights record and moving forward on a resolution to the border conflict with Eritrea.

SOMALIA

13. (C) The former Charge told Tekeda that Ethiopia was moving more troops and equipment to the Somali border and asked what Ethiopia had planned. Tekeda explained that Ethiopian continues to leave the door open for dialogue and it was preferable to armed conflict. He said that the CIC has been invited to talks in Addis Ababa but, thus far, the CIC has been reluctant to take the offer. Tekeda noted that the GOE has been in constant dialogue with the CIC through its representatives in London, but the GOE insists that any meaningful talks must be held in Addis Ababa. Tekeda said that once the CIC becomes "serious" about holding substantive talks, Ethiopia is ready.

14. (C) Huddleston asked Tekeda if the GOE had thought about advocating for a TFG that better reflected Somalia's

population. Tekeda said that at this point and given the TFG weakened status, it wasn't worth it to shuffle positions in the TFG. He noted, however, that a "successful" dialogue between the TFG and CIC would result in some incorporation of the CIC into the TFIs. He said that Hawiye representation in particular would likely be strengthened. Tekeda posited that the TFG needed to be better at its public diplomacy effort. He said that the TFG needed to focus on denying the CIC momentum, rather than reversing the situation. Tekeda suggested that the TFG target moderates and give them an alternative to the CIC.

SOMALILAND

15. (C) Huddleston asked the Deputy Foreign Minister about the CIC's efforts and successes to subvert Somaliland. Tekeda said that Somaliland will "hold firm," but it's in need of capital (money) to continue holding off the CIC's advances into the region. Tekeda said that recognition of Somaliland as an independent nation by the international community is the only way to limit the CIC's growth and ambitions of a "greater Somalia." Tekeda suggested that the US and UK lobby African countries, particularly South Africa, Congo Brazzaville, and Zambia, to support Somaliland independence. He said that Arab League opposition might be neutralized even though Libya would be opposed to Somaliland's independence, if Egypt could be swayed. Tekeda explained how Djibouti would be against independence because of the Arab League's influence over the country, but added that Egypt could play a pivotal role in getting Djibouti to a neither for or against stance on the issue.

BORDER

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16. (C) Huddleston explained to Tekeda the USG's concern about the EEBC's decision to demarcate the border based on coordinates and pushed the Deputy Foreign Minister to continue dialogue with the Witnesses. Tekeda said that the GOE did not understand the EEBC's decision and questioned why the EEBC was "rewarding" Eritrea for violating 1640 and occupying the TSZ. Huddleston said that Ethiopia's decision not to attend the November 20 EEBC meeting sent the wrong signal to the international community. Tekeda lamented that if the current situation with Eritrea did not exist, the two countries would be formidable allies and a powerful force against the "problems" in Somalia. Huddleston told Tekeda that the current border impasse was one of Ethiopia's greatest challenges and its resolution key to Ethiopia's democratic and economic development.

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